

## ENERGY STREAMLINING TASK FORCE PROJECT SUMMARY

**Name:** Powder River Basin (PRB) Project

O-3

**Entity proposing project:** Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corp. (DM&E)

**Category of project:** Other (Rail Transportation)

**Brief description of project:** Involves rehabilitation of over 1,000 miles of existing track and construction of 260 miles of rail line to connect existing rail line to Powder River Basin mines; would create independent line running east/west into basin, which would decrease rail congestion in PRB area & farther east; new tracks are designed for independent access to each mine to relieve congestion at mouth of mine

**Agencies that must be consulted and agencies from which approval is needed:**

**Federal:** Surface Transportation Board (lead agency for EIS purposes) – issues permit to construct/operate rail extension [committed to issuing final EIS this fall circa October]  
Army Corps of Engineers – issues Section 404 Wetlands & Stream Crossing permits for new construction & rebuilding existing lines  
U.S. Forest Service – issues easement/permit to cross USDS lands (SD & WY)  
Bureau of Land Management – issues easement/permit to cross BLM lands (SD & WY)  
Bureau of Reclamation – issues easement/permit to cross BOR administered lands & project easements within Angastora irrigation district (SD only)  
U.S. Coast Guard – issues permit to upgrade/replace existing rail bridges crossing Missouri River & James River  
EPA, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service & National Parks Service – involved with design, writing, rewriting & review of EIS

**State, tribal and local:** numerous entities in the 3 states.

**Project Timeline:**

Application Filed – February 1998  
Draft EIS Scope – June 1998  
Transportation merits approved – December 1998  
Final EIS Scope – August 1999  
Draft EIS Published – October 2000  
Public Comments Finalized – March 2001

**Reason for bringing project to the task force's attention:** Because of a limited construction season from late April to October and the basic requirement of 8-9 months preparation for construction after receiving the final permit, DM&E requests consensus from various agencies as to a schedule for issuing the permits (ideally so could start construction next year and not lose another construction season).

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**Internal Notes:** the Task Force proposed the following schedule to agencies on 11/13/01:

BLM	+40 days (after final EIS published)
US Forest Service	+40 days
Bureau of Reclamation	+40 days
Corps of Engineers	+160 days
US Coast Guard	+90 days